

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1        A system for stiffening and securing adjacent joists comprising:

                 a band having a length of at least the distance spanning two joists,  
                 the bands configured to rest upon and be secured to a top edge surface  
of the at least two joists,

                 at least one truss member secured to an underside of the band to lie  
between the joists,

                 the at least one truss member having vertical sides members,  
                 the at least one truss having a length equal to a spacing between joists  
so that when the bands are secured to a top side of the at least two joist, the  
side members abut sides of the at least two joists to hold the at least two joists  
in a vertical orientation at a specified distance between the at least two joists.

Claim 2        The stiffening system of claim 1 wherein there are a  
plurality of bands and truss members, and

                 wherein the bands are placed on top of the at least two joist spaced  
apart from one another along the length of each joist.

Claim 3        The stiffening system of claim 1 wherein the band has  
fastener openings therein which openings are spaced along the length of band  
to at least have an opening alignable with the top edge of each joist covered.

Claim 4        The stiffening system of claim 2 wherein the band has  
fastener openings therein which openings are spaced along the length of band  
to at least have an opening alignable with the top edge of each joist covered.

Claim 5        The stiffening system of claim 1 wherein the truss is  
configured as a rectangular box.

Claim 6        The stiffening system of claim 2 wherein the truss is configured as a rectangular box.

Claim 7        The stiffening system of claim 3 wherein the truss is configured as a rectangular box.

Claim 8        The stiffening system of claim 4 wherein the truss is configured as a rectangular box.

Claim 9        The stiffening system of claim 5 wherein the truss also has an X-shaped brace extending between the corners of the box.

Claim 10       The stiffening system of claim 6 wherein the truss also has an X-shaped brace extending between the corners of the box.

Claim 11       The stiffening system of claim 7 wherein the truss also has an X-shaped brace extending between the corners of the box.

Claim 12       The stiffening system of claim 8 wherein the truss also has an X-shaped brace extending between the corners of the box.

Claim 13       The stiffening system of claim 1 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 14       The stiffening system of claim 2 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 15 The stiffening system of claim 3 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 16 The stiffening system of claim 4 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 17 The stiffening system of claim 5 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 18 The stiffening system of claim 6 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 19 The stiffening system of claim 9 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.

Claim 20 The stiffening system of claim 10 wherein the vertical side members of the truss are provided with apertures for placement of mechanical connectors to secure the side members of the truss to a side of a joist.